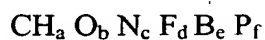


IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A thin-film magnetic head having an MR head portion containing magnetoresistive elements, wherein a protective film having the composition represented by the following formula:



(where $a = 0 - 0.7$, $b = 0 - 1$, $c = 0 - 1$, $d = 0 - 1$, $e = 0 - 1$, and $f = 0 - 1$, in terms of atomic ratio), and having a thickness of ~~40 Å or less~~ 10 Å - 30 Å, is formed on at least the surface of said MR head portion facing a recording medium.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The magnetic head according to Claim 1, wherein $a = 0.05 - 0.7$.

4. - 8. (Canceled)

9. (Original) A magnetic disk device having at least one slider equipped with the thin-film magnetic head according to Claim 1.

10. (Canceled)